

Message Text

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ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NSF-02 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 INR-07

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7940

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 04867

FOR OES/SCI AND PASS NSF/DR. BRAINARD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TGEN

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION (ESF), AN IMPORTANT
ELEMENT IN THE PROGRAMMING OF FRENCH DOMESTIC AND
INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

1. IN A LITTLE MORE THAN A YEAR SINCE THE FOUNDING OF
THE EUROPEAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION (ESF), WITH THE STRONG
ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE FRENCH, IT IS BECOMING A MAJOR
ELEMENT IN THE PROGRAMMING OF FRENCH DOMESTIC AND

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INTERNATIONAL BASIC RESEARCH.

2. PROF. BERNARD GREGORY, HEAD OF THE MAJOR BASIC RESEARCH ARM OF THE GOF, THE CNRS, THE FRENCH NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTERS, WHICH HAS A 2.5 BILLION FRANC (\$570 MILLION) ANNUAL BUDGET, RECENTLY STATED THAT HE GIVES CONSIDERABLE WEIGHT TO THE RESEARCH PLANNING PERSPECTIVES AFFORDED BY THE ESF. IT IS HIS INTENTION TO EVALUATE ALL PROPOSALS FOR BASIC RESEARCH SUPPORT WHICH ARE MADE WITHIN CNRS, AND TO CNRS FROM OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, IN LIGHT OF WHAT OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRY MEMBERS ARE PLANNING FOR THEIR RESEARCH ACTIVITIES; AND HE VIEWS THE ESF AS THE MECHANISM FOR MAKING SUCH COMPARISONS. HE WANTS TO HAVE THE ESF ACT AS A CLEARINGHOUSE AND COORDINATOR SO THAT AMONG ITS MEMBER NATIONS A COMPREHENSIVE AND RATIONAL COVERAGE OF EACH PARTICULAR RESEARCH AREA OF INTEREST CAN BE ACHIEVED. ONLY BY CLOSE COORDINATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH TASKS CAN THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HOPE TO DO RESEARCH COLLECTIVELY EQUIVALENT IN QUALITY AND DEPTH OF COVERAGE TO THAT WHICH IS DONE BY THE U.S., IN HIS OPINION.

3. INsofar AS FRENCH-AMERICAN RESEARCH COOPERATION IS CONCERNED, DR. GREGORY AGAIN SEES THE ESF AS THE LOGICAL POINT OF COORDINATION. AS HE EXPLAINED, ONCE THE ESF COUNTRIES WORK OUT A PROGRAM OF COOPERATIVE EFFORT ON A PARTICULAR RESEARCH TOPIC, THEY CAN TURN TO THE U.S. AND ASK WHAT EFFORTS COULD BE PROFITABLY SHARED.

4. EVENTUALLY PROF. GREGORY WOULD LIKE TO SEE A TIME WHEN HE AND HIS COLLEAGUE DIRECTORS (OF BASIC GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED RESEARCH IN EUROPE) COORDINATE THEIR EFFORTS TO THE EXTENT OF HARMONIZING THEIR RESEARCH BUDGETS.

5. IN THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS ARE SUMMARIZED RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ORIGIN, MAKEUP, AND PRESENT ACTIVITIES OF THE ESF.

A. HISTORY. THE ESF WAS FIRST AGREED UPON IN PRINCIPLE IN THE COURSE OF A MEETING OF 16 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN
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FRANCE IN SEPTEMBER 1973. THEN IN NOVEMBER OF 1974 AT A MEETING IN STRASBOURG, FRANCE, THE ESF WAS FORMALLY

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ESTABLISHED.

B. MEMBERSHIP AND DIRECTION. WITH PERMANENT HEAD-
QUARTERS IN STRASBOURG, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF A
PRESIDENT, SIR BRIAN FLOWERS, THE ESF HAS 16 MEMBER
COUNTRIES, REPRESENTING 43 DIFFERENT SCIENTIFIC
ORGANIZATIONS: AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, DENMARK, FEDERAL
REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, FRANCE, GREECE, ICELAND, ITALY,
NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, PORTUGAL, SPAIN, SWEDEN,
SWITZERLAND, UNITED KINGDOM, AND YUGOSLAVIA. FRANCE

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IS REPRESENTED BY B. P. GREGORY, P. CREYSSEL, AND

G. OURISSON OF THE CNRS; BY H. CURIEN, THE HEAD OF THE FRENCH S & T COORDINATING AGENCY, THE DGRST, AND J. F. MIQUEL OF THE DGRST; AND BY C. BURG, HEAD OF INSERM, THE NATIONAL MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE, AND P. LAUDAT OF INSERM.

C. MISSION AND OPERATION. ESF IS TO PROMOTE COOPERATION IN FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH, STIMULATE EXCHANGES OF IDEAS AND INFORMATION, FACILITATE THE EXCHANGE OF SCIENTISTS AMONG THE MEMBER COUNTRIES, AND TO HARMONIZE THE RESEARCH PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE ESF COUNTRY MEMBERS. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ESF, WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH COUNTRY, MEETS AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR TO DEFINE GENERAL POLICY, APPROVE THE CREATION OF COMMITTEES, AND TO ADOPT THE OPERATING BUDGET (2.2 MILLION FRANCS, ABOUT \$500,000 FOR 1976).

D. SPECIAL STUDY AREAS. FROM TIME TO TIME THE ESF WILL SELECT SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC AREAS FOR SPECIAL STUDY. CURRENTLY THESE ARE: ASTRONOMY, SPACE RESEARCH, PARTICLE ACCELERATORS, SOCIAL SCIENCES, ARCHEOLOGY, MATHEMATICS, AND GENETIC ENGINEERING. IN THE AREA OF SPACE RESEARCH A WORK GROUP HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO DEVELOP INDEPENDENT JUDGMENTS ON LARGE-SCALE SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMS AND ON LONG-TERM POLICY IN COOPERATION WITH CORRESPONDING AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS. A GENETIC ENGINEERING GROUP HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO DEFINE A COMMON EUROPEAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE RESPONSIBILITY OF RESEARCHERS AND TO DEVELOP IMPLEMENTING RULES PERTAINING TO MINIMIZING THE RISK OF GENETIC ENGINEERING EXPERIMENTS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME NOT ATTENUATING PROGRESS IN THIS FIELD. A SOCIAL SCIENCES WORKING GROUP IS CHARGED WITH DEVELOPING MEMBER COOPERATION AS A FIRST STEP TOWARD THE CREATION OF A EUROPEAN SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES WHICH WILL UTILIZE METHODS AND FOLLOW CRITERIA ADAPTED TO EUROPEAN CONDITIONS AND NOT OVERLY INFLUENCED BY AMERICAN RESEARCH.

6. COMMENT. WHILE AN IMPORTANT AND INFLUENTIAL VOICE IN THE GOF, PROFESSOR GREGORY LOOKS ONLY AT WHAT INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE COOPERATION CAN DO FOR SCIENCE AND NOT WHAT IT CAN DO FOR GENERAL FOREIGN RELATIONS OR, MORE UNCLASSIFIED
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TO THE POINT, WHAT IT CAN DO FOR FRANCE'S ECONOMY. OTHERS, WITH MORE WEIGHT, SUCH AS THE DGRST'S CURIEN AND THE FOREIGN OFFICE'S DE NAZELLE ACTIVELY PROMOTE THESE CONSIDERATIONS. THUS WE DO NOT FORESEE FRANCE SUBMITTING ITS BILATERAL S & T COOPERATION PROGRAM TO ESF SCRUTINY AND IMPLICIT APPROBATION. HOWEVER, PROFESSOR GREGORY'S MESSAGE TO CURRENT AND POTENTIAL U.S. RESEARCH AGENCIES COOPERATING WITH FRENCH ORGANIZATIONS IS CLEAR: TO OPTIMIZE THE CHANCES FOR SUCCESS IN

BILATERAL EFFORTS, KNOW WELL THE TOTAL EUROPEAN
RESEARCH SCENE, AND THEREFORE FOLLOW ESF'S ACTIVITIES
CLOSELY.

7. OBSERVATIONS OF POSTS OF OTHER ESF MEMBER COUNTRIES
ON THE CURRENT AND PROJECTED IMPACT OF ESF ON RESEARCH
PLANNING AND PROJECTS MAY BE USEFUL TO USG ELEMENTS
FOLLOWING INTERNATIONAL S & T COOPERATION.
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